

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 01996 01 OF 02 072222Z

67

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 PC-04 DRC-01 SPM-01 /121 W

----- 026206

R 072104Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1648

INFO USCINCSO

AMCONSUL CALI

AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BOGOTA 1996

E.O. 11652:

TAGS: PINT, CO

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN ROUNDUP

USCINCSO FOR J-2

SUMMARY: LOPEZ AND THE LIBERALS CONTINUE TO BE CONFIDENT OF VICTORY AND LOPEZ CAMPAIGN HAS MOVED INTO HIGH GEAR. SOME LIBERAL LEADERS NOW GIVE THE ANAPO CANDIDATE A CHANCE TO BEAT THE CONSERVATIVE. CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES OF THE TWO TRADITIONAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN LOWER THAN EXPECTED. NEIGHBORHOOD REGISTRATIONS IN THE FOUR MAJOR CITIES OF COLOMBIA ARE NOT AS HIGH AS THE LIBERALS EXPECTED. THE PREPARATION OF CONGRESSIONAL LISTS HAS ENTERED A CRITICAL PHASE AND CAUSED SERIOUS INTERNAL PROBLEMS IN ALL PARTIES.

2. DURING THE MONTH OF FEB THE LIBERALS BEGAN AN ALL OUT EFFORT TO GET THE VOTE OUT FOR THEIR CANDIDATE, ALFONSO LOPEZ MICHELSEN. BY LAW PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES MUST FILE WITH THE MAYOR OF BOGOTA. THE LIBERALS TURNED LOPEZ FILING INTO A RALLY AND PARADE THROUGH THE CENTER OF THE CITY ON FEB 15. THE EVENT WAS A SUCCESS, IF SOMEWHAT EXAGGERATED IN THE LIBERAL PRESS. LOPEZ AND PARTY

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 01996 01 OF 02 072222Z

DIRECTOR TURBAY ARE DOING MUCH MORE CAMPAIGNING AND

NOW MOVE AROUND AT A PACE ALMOST EQUAL TO THAT OF THE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE, ALVARO GOMEZ HURTADO, AND MARIA EUGENIA ROJAS DE MORENO OF ANAPO, BOTH OF WHOM SEEM TO BE HOLDING UP WELL AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF INTENSIVE CAMPAIGNING. GOMEZ HAS ADOPTED MRS MORENO'S TACTIC OF TRAVELLING BY HELICOPTER AND LOPEZ PLANS TO FOLLOW SUIT.

3. THE LATEST POLL DONE FOR THE LIBERALS INCLUDED THE FOUR LARGEST CITIES OF COLOMBIA: BOGOTA, CALI, MEDELLIN AND BARRANQUILLA. LOPEZ COMES OUT THE WINNER WITH A COMBINED AVERAGE OF SIXTY PERCENT, FOLLOWED BY MRS MORENO WITH TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT GOMEZ RUNS A POOR THIRD WITH ABOUT TEN PERCENT AND THE UNO CANDIDATE, HERNANDO ECHEVERRI MEJIA, HAS LESS THAN FIVE PERCENT. THE CONSERVATIVES HAVE TOLD US PRIVATELY THEY ARE DISENCHANTED WITH POLLS AND WILL NOT ADMIT TO ANY IN RECENT WEEKS.

4. THE CONSERVATIVES STILL ADHERE TO THEIR BASIC STRATEGY OF RETRIEVING THE CONSERVATIVE ANAPO VOTE AND GETTING OUT THE RURAL VOTE THEY ALSO COUNT ON A SMALL LIBERAL TURNOUT, VOTER PREFERENCE FOR THE STATUS QUO RATHER THAN EXPERIMENTATION WITH THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS OF THE NATION AND ANAPO AND UNO INROADS INTO LIBERAL STRENGTH IN THE CITIES. MRS MORENO HAS TOLD US THAT SHE WILL BEAT GOMEZ AND LIBERAL PARTY DIRECTOR TURBAY SUPPORTS HER, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, IN THIS NOTION HE NOW LOOKS FOR 2,000,000 VOTES FOR LOPEZ, 1,200,000 FOR MRS MORENO AND 1,100,000 FOR GOMEZ. MRS MORENO MAY DO WELL IN THE CITIES, BUT WE DOUBT SHE CAN OVERCOME THE LARGE VOTE GOMEZ EXPECTS TO WIN IN RURAL COLOMBIA.

5. AS FOR CAMPAIGN THEMES, LOPEZ PROCLAIMS TO HAVE FOUND A SENSE OF TRANQUILITY IN THE COUNTRY AND AN AIR OF EXPECTATION AND HE CONCLUDES THAT THIS SENSE OF WELL BEING STEMS FROM THE ANTICIPATION OF A LIBERAL VICTORY. "NOWHERE", HE SAID ON FEB 23, ON NATIONAL TELEVISION, DO I FIND THAT ATMOSPHERE OF UNCERTAINTY THAT PRECEDES GREAT CRISES". IN THE SAME SPEECH HE TOUCHED ON
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 01996 01 OF 02 072222Z

COLOMBIA RIGHTS IN THE PANAMA CANAL. "IT IS AN AMERICAN OBLIGATION TO PERMIT FREE PASSAGE FOR OUR VESSELS. IF PANAMA DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THAT RIGHT, IT IS UP TO THE US TO TAKE ON THE OBLIGATION. IF THE US CANNOT DO IT BECAUSE SHE IS NO LONGER THE OWNER OF THE CANAL, SHE SHOULD PAY THE TARIFFS THAT PANAMA CHARGES OUR VESSELS". LOPEZ HAS ALSO PROMISED TO BRAKE INCREASING CENTRALISM, TO GOVERN WITH A FIRM HAND, HAS CALLED

FOR EFFECTIVE FAMILY PLANNING AND SAID THAT ALL RELIGIOUS SECTS SHOULD ENJOY THE SAME TAX PRIVILEGES.

6. GOMEZ, MEANWHILE, FOUND THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEFEND HIS EARLIER OFFER OF A BULLDOZER AND DUMP TRUCK FOR EVERY MUNICIPALITY. LOPEZ HAD RIDICULED THE OFFER, SAYING HE PREFERRED HORSES. GOMEZ TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY IN A MAJOR SPEECH TO SAY THAT THE LIBERAL CANDIDATES REMARKS DEMONSTRATE PERFECTLY HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD DEVELOPMENT. CONSERVATIVES APPRECIATE HORSES, SAID GOMEZ, BUT CERTAINLY DO NOT REGARD THEM AS SYMBOLS OF THE FUTURE. LOPEZ, HE ADDED, IS "VIOLENTLY ANTI-PROGRESSIVE". ON A NATIONALLY TELEVISED SPEECH, GOMEZ DWELT AT LENGTH ON HIS CONCEPT OF "DEVELOPMENTALISM" AND EXPLAINED HOW ALL WILL BENEFIT BY INCREASED PRODUCTION AND MORE EXPORTS. HE CONTINUES TO EMPHASIZE STABILITY AND SAYS, "THERE WILL BE WORK IN MY ADMINISTRATION, NOT REVOLUTIONS.".

7. ANAPO BITTERNESS TOWARD GOMEZ CONTINUES AT A HIGH LEVEL. AS THE CAMPAIGN APPROACHES ITS PEAK ANAPO HAS TROTTED OUT GENERAL ROJAS TO SPEAK AT MAJOR RALLIES IN THE LARGE CITIES. ON MARCH 6 THE GENERAL TOLD REPORTERS IN MEDELLIN THAT "GOMEZ IS A THREAT TO THE LIVES, HONOR AND PROPERTY OF ALL COLOMBIANS". IF HE HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN GOMEZ AND LOPEZ, HE SAID, HE WOULD OPT FOR THE LATTER.

8. ON THE QUESTION OF FINANCES, THE LIBERALS ARE SPENDING MUCH LESS THAN THEY EXPECTED. THEY HAVE NOT COLLECTED AS MUCH AS HOPED, BUT THEY ARE RECEIVING A GREAT DEAL OF FREE PUBLICITY AND REDUCED PRICES ON SUCH IMPORTANT ITEMS AS TRANSPORTATION FOR RALLIES AND PROPAGANDA MATERIAL. FOR EXAMPLE, THE ORGANIZERS OF THE FEB 15 RALLY IN BOGOTA WERE PREPARED

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 01996 01 OF 02 072222Z

TO SPEND UP TO 1,000,000 PESOS (ON PESOS EQUALS FOUR US CENTS), BUT THE TOTAL COST CAME TO ONLY 300,000 PESOS. THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR HAS LEARNED THAT UP TO MARCH 1 THE LOPEZ CAMPAIGN HAD SPENT 13,000,000 PESOS, PLUS ADDITIONAL SMALL AMOUNT
E E E E E E E

ADP000
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 01996 02 OF 02 072249Z

67
ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 PC-04 SPM-01 DRC-01 /121 W

----- 026626

R 072104Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1649

INFO USCINCSO

AMCONSUL CALI

AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BOGOTA 1996

9. ONE OF THE KEY INDICATORS IN COLOMBIAN ELECTIONS IS THE NUMBER OF NEIGHBORHOOD REGISTRATIONS IN THE PRINCIPAL CITIES. THE SYSTEM, WHICH WAS INAUGURATED ON A FULL SCALE BASIS IN BOGOTA IN 1970, PERMITS VOTERS TO REGISTER AT BOOTHS NEAR THEIR HOMES AND VOTE IN POLLING PLACES SET UP IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS. THE SYSTEM WAS EXTENDED TO CALI AND MEDELLIN IN 72 AND TO BARRANQUILLA THIS YEAR. NEIGHBORHOOD REGISTRATIONS CLOSE ON MAR 21. THOSE WHO DO NOT REGISTER MUST GO DOWNTOWN TO VOTE. IN 70, WHEN NEIGHBORHOOD REGISTRATIONS IN BOGOTA AMOUNTED TO 408,000, THE TOTAL VOTE IN THE CITY WAS 564,000. IN 72, BOGOTA REGISTRATIONS WERE 172,000 AND THE TOTAL VOTE 273,000. THERE IS, THEN, A CLOSE CORRELATION BETWEEN SUCH REGISTRATIONS AND VOTER TURNOUT. BY MARCH 6 ONLY 244,000 VOTERS HAD REGISTERED IN BOGOTA AND THE FIGURES ARE ALSO LOW IN OTHER CITIES; UNLESS THE PACE PICKS UP DRAMATICALLY, LIBERAL HOPES FOR 500,000 VOTES IN BOGOTA ARE GOING TO BE FRUSTRATED, NOR WILL THEY GET THE MASSIVE TURNOUT THEY EXPECT IN THE OTHER LARGE CITIES. THE NATIONAL CIVIL REGISTRY TELLS US THEY EXPECT A HUGE INCREASE IN REGISTRATION IN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS AND PROJECT 500,000 TO 600,000 NEIGHBORHOOD REGISTRATIONS IN BOGOTA.

10. THE MOST SERIOUS CONCERN OF ALL THE PARTIES AT THIS TIME IS THE SELECTION OF CANDIDATES FOR CONGRESS. COLOMBIANS VOTE FOR LISTS OF CANDIDATES AND THE COMPOSITION OF THE LISTS IS ONE OF THE MOST DELICATE TASKS OF POLITICAL LEADERS. THIS YEAR THERE ARE HORDES OF ASPIRANTS FOR THE 304 SEATS IN THE SENATE AND CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES. COLOMBIA'S DEPARTMENTS CONSTITUTE THE ELECTORAL DISTRICTS AND IN MANY DEPTS THE PROBLEM IS SOLVED BY HOLDING CONVENTIONS; IN OTHERS, THERE IS A UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED POLITICAL BOSS OF THE DEPT WHO DECIDES THE ISSUE. IN STILL OTHERS, PRINCIPALLY ON THE NORTH COAST, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF BOSSES, ALL OF WHOM HEAD THEIR OWN LISTS. IN THE LIBERAL PARTY THIS YEAR TURBAY IS DECIDING THE COMPOSITION OF THE LISTS IN MANY DEPTS. HE HIMSELF WILL HEAD THE SENATE LIST FOR CUNDINAMARCA. DAVID ALJURE

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 01996 02 OF 02 072249Z

CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

TION OF THE LISTS IS ONE OF THE MOST DELICATE TASKS OF POLITICAL LEADERS. THIS YEAR THERE ARE HORDES OF ASPIRANTS FOR THE 304 SEATS IN THE SENATE AND CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES. COLOMBIA'S DEPARTMENTS CONSTITUTE THE ELECTORAL DISTRICTS AND IN MANY DEPTS THE PROBLEM IS SOLVED BY HOLDING CONVENTIONS; IN OTHERS, THERE IS A UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED POLITICAL BOSS OF THE DEPT WHO DECIDES THE ISSUE. IN STILL OTHERS, PRINCIPALLY ON THE NORTH COAST, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF BOSSES, ALL OF WHOM HEAD THEIR OWN LISTS. IN THE LIBERAL PARTY THIS YEAR TURBAY IS DECIDING THE COMPOSITION OF THE LISTS IN MANY DEPTS. HE HIMSELF WILL HEAD THE SENATE LIST FOR CUNDINAMARCA. DAVID ALJURE

PRES OF THE CHAMBER OF REPS, WANTED A BETTER POSITION ON THE SENATE LIST THEN HE WAS OFFERED AND DECIDED TO LAUNCH A GROUP KNOWN AS THE INDEPENDENT LIBERALS IN ASSOCIATION WITH CONSUELO DE MONTEJO, PUBLISHER OF EL PERIODICO NEWSPAPER. THE RISK OF FAILURE FOR ALJURE IS HIGH, BUT IF HE DOES GET ENOUGH VOTES TO WIN A SEAT IN THE SENATE HE WILL HAVE CARVED OUT A POWER BASE INDEPENDENT OF TURBAY THAT HE CAN BUILD ON IN THE FUTURE. IN THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY THE NATIONAL DIRECTORATE HAS IMPOSED ITS WILL IN SOME DEPTS AND CREATED RESENTMENT.

11. A LARGE NUMBER OF LISTS DOES NOT DETRACT FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL VOTE, AS ALL DISSIDENT BALLOTS WILL CONTAIN THE NAME OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OF THE PARTY, AND IT IS ARGUED BY SOME THAT INTRA PARTY STRIFE SERVES TO GET THE VOTE OUT. STILL, LARGE NUMBERS OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES ON DISSIDENT LITSTS FORETELL A LACK OF PARTY UNITY IN CONGRESS AND CONSEQUENT INABILITY TO PROCESS LEGISLATION SWIFTLY. FROM THE INFO WE HAVE RECEIVED TO DATE ABOUT THE MAKEUP OF LISTS, IT APPEARS THE NEW CONGRESS WILL LOOK MUCH LIKE THE PRESENT ONE - VERY FEW NEW FACES ARE IN EVIDENCE.

12. VIOLENCE REMAINS AT A LOW LEVEL. THE MILITARY AND POLICE ARE PREPARED FOR ANY EVENTUALITY AND HAVE EVEN SET UP A SPECIAL NATIONWIDE COMMUNICATIONS NET, BUT ALL ARE CONFIDENT THE ELECTIONS WILL COME OFF IN RELATIVE CALM. THE TRIBUNAL DE GUARANTIAS WE MENTIONED IN OUR TEL 1039 IS WORKING BETTER THAN EXPECTED AND HAS RECEIVED COOPERATION FROM THE GOVT, ALTHOUGH SOME COMPLAINTS ARE HEARD THAT REQUESTS FROM TRIBUNAL MEMBERS FOR INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS ARE BEING PROCESSED TOO SLOWLY. THE MIN OF GOVT ON FEB DISMISSED TWELVE MINOR OFFICIALS AROUND THE COUNTRY WHO HAD BEEN CCUSED OF ENGAGING IN POLIT ACTIVITY ON BEHALF OF THEIR PARTIES.
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 01996 02 OF 02 072249Z

THE ANAPO REP ON THE TRIBUNAL COMPLAINED THAT 100 SHOULD HAVE BEEN FIRED. THE REP ON THE TRIBUNAL OF THE LEFTIST COALITION UNO SAID THE MIN OF DEF AND THE DIR OF THE DEPT OF ADMIN SECURITY HAD PROMISED FULL GUARANTEES TOHIS GROUP. THAT BEING THE CASE, HE WANTED TO KNOW WHY HIS TELEPHONE IS TAPPED.

13. THE MINOR CANDIDATES HAVE BECOME MORE ACTIVE IN RECENT WEEKS. HERNANDO ECHEVERRI OF UNO HAS STAGED A NUMBER OF RALLIES AROUND THE COUNTRY, ALL OF THEM WELL ATTENDED AND SOME OBSERVERS NOW EXPECT THE UNO VOTE TO GO ABOVE 300,000; THEY REASON THAT MAL-CONTENTS WHO MIGHT NORMALLY VOTE FOR ANAPO WILL NOT BE ABLE TO BRING THEMSELVES TO VOTE FOR A WOMAN. THE SOCIAL CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT, HERMES DURATE, HAS RECEIVED A GOOD DEAL OF FREE PUBLICITY IN THE PRESS AND ONE OF COLOMBIA'S LEADING HUMORISTS HAS ADOPTED DUARTE AS HIS CANDIDATE. WHITE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NATIONAL ELECTIONS, PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS, ELECTION CANDIDATES, ELECTION FORECASTS, VOTER REGISTRATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BOGOTA01996
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740362/aaaacfli.tel
Line Count: 273
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <03 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN ROUNDUP USCINCSO FOR J-2
TAGS: PINT, CO, (DE MORENO, MARIA EUGENIA ROJAS), (GOMEZ HURTADO, ALVARO), (LOPEZ MICHEDSEN, ALFONSO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005